



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

APR 16 2002

THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Jean Carnahan
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Carnahan:

Thank you for your letter of March 5, 2002, concerning the lead contamination in Herculaneum, Missouri. I share your concern about protecting the public health, particularly the health of children, and always support timely action wherever a public health threat from a Superfund site exists.

Currently, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a draft Hazard Ranking System package that preliminarily shows that the Herculaneum site qualifies for placement on the National Priorities List (NPL). If the Doe Run Company is unable or unwilling to continue cleanup activities at this site, EPA can proceed with other options provided in the Superfund law, including the option of listing the site on the NPL. The EPA strongly supports the "Polluter Pays" concept. The Superfund law puts the burden of paying for cleanup where it should be: on those responsible for creating the problem. Through aggressive action by the EPA, nearly 70 percent of all Superfund sites have been cleaned up by responsible parties.

The Agency's response actions to date in Herculaneum have focused on the health-related issues in the community, in particular, protection of children's health. The removal of lead-contaminated yard soils and the cleanup of dust from home interiors will remove the most significant routes of exposure to the children and other residents in Herculaneum. These measures, along with health education, have been effective at other lead sites in lowering children's blood lead levels and greatly reducing the rate of lead poisoning in children.

Given the multiple exposures to lead contamination that residents are being subjected to, EPA has negotiated two orders with the Doe Run Company with aggressive schedules to address residential yard soils and interior dust, road dust, and smelter emissions which represent the most urgent risks to the public. EPA maintains an oversight responsibility when responsible parties perform such work. To this end, EPA is working with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources in implementing and overseeing the Doe Run Company's cleanup activities.

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U.S. EPA - Superfund HQ
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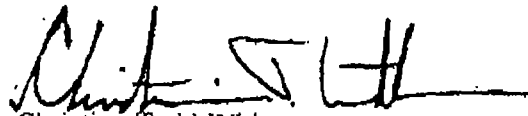
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These activities include sampling and monitoring to confirm lead contamination has been reduced to risk-based levels; i.e., yards and homes are safe. A summary of the response actions currently underway at the site is enclosed.

Again, thank you for sharing your concerns with me. As activities proceed in Herculaneum, my staff will make sure to keep you and your staff apprised of the situation. If you have further questions, please contact me, or your staff may contact Betsy Henry in the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, at (202) 564-7222.

Sincerely yours,



Christine Todd Whitman

Enclosure

05-22-02 07:21 TO:

FROM: 703 603 9104